

St. Barnabas Church

MOTHER HOUSE OF THE BARNABITES (MILAN)



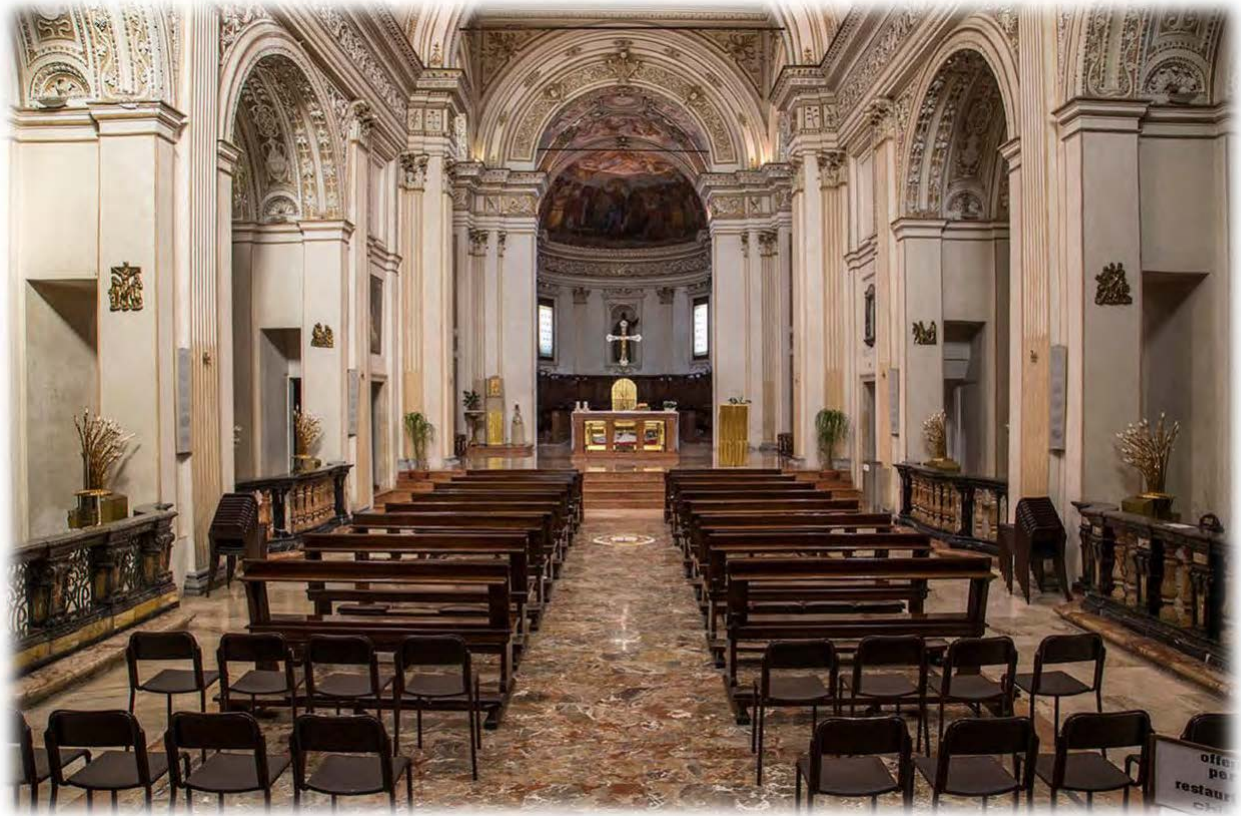
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Mother House of the Barnabites (Milan)

by Fr. Virginio M. Martinoni, CRSP

Barnabite Publications 2020

1. The ancient church of “*St. Barnabas in Capite Broli*” (from the 12th century to 1545)



The little historical information we have about the Apostle Barnabas goes back to the Acts of the Apostles.

Acts 4:36-37 “Thus Joseph, also named by the apostles Barnabas (which is translated ‘**son of encouragement**’), a Levite, a Cypriot by birth, sold a piece of property that he owned, then brought the money and put it at the feet of the apostles.”

Acts 11:22-26 “News of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent

Barnabas to Antioch. When he came and saw the grace of God, he rejoiced, and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast devotion; for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were brought to the Lord. Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for an entire year they met with the church and taught a great many of people, and it was in Antioch that the disciples were first called ‘Christians.’”

Acts 11:29-30 - “The disciples determined that according to their ability, each would send relief to the believers living in Judea: This they did, sending it to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.”

- **Barnabas took Paul under his wing** when most of his disciples were shying away from him, fearful of his reputation. Because of his



great faith, he was able to put his trust in the Lord, and in his instinctively generous nature, rather than in the rumors and gossip which would have isolated Paul from the rest of the body of believers. Barnabas was sent by the church of Jerusalem to new converts in Antioch. His historic success there was primarily because of encouragement.

- His name was even changed from Joseph to Barnabas. Although he was a prophet and a teacher (cf. Acts 13:1), he used his gift of encouragement to build up the church of

Antioch, and then he spent the entire year teaching them (Acts 11:26).

- **Barnabas was filled with the Holy Spirit.** In other words, he was heedful of and obedient to God’s word and he sought to conform himself to God’s plan for his life as he understood it. When he journeyed with Paul, they did not seek the privileges which they might have rightfully demanded. Instead they worked with their hands as craftsmen in order to support themselves and to be a burden to no one (1 Cor. 9:6; 1 Thes. 2:9)

Council of Jerusalem

Acts 15:2 – “Because there arose no little dissension and debate by Paul and Barnabas with them, it was decided that Paul, Barnabas, and some of the others should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and presbyters about this question.”

Paul and Barnabas Separate

Acts 15:36-39 “After some time, Paul said to Barnabas, ‘Come, let us make a return visit to see how the brothers are getting on in all the



cities where we proclaimed the word of the Lord.' Barnabas wanted to take with them also John, who was called Mark, but Paul insisted that they should not take with them someone who had deserted them at Pamphylia and who had not continued with them in their work. So sharp was their disagreement that they separated. Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus."

The Rest is Tradition or Legend

Legend has it that Barnabas died a martyr's death while preaching in Cyprus, being buried in an unknown location. It is claimed that in the fifth century, he appeared to the Bishop of Salamis and told him the location of his remains. The bishop followed the instructions and found a catacomb containing Barnabas' body, holding a copy of the Gospel according to St. Matthew. A monastic community - the Monastery of Apostolos Varnavas - was founded at the site shortly afterwards, a community, which lasted from the fifth century until 1976, when the last elderly monks left for Greek Cyprus. Nowadays, the monastery is a museum; it and the catacomb tomb can be visited daily.

It is tradition that St. Barnabas was the first to preach the Gospel in Rome, and then in Milan. Together with Nathaniel, he founded the Church of Milan and was its first bishop. Today critics deny that St. Barnabas was in Milan and, therefore, they deny the apostolic origins of the Milanese diocese.

According to Calderini the coming of St. Barnabas to Milan is a legend from the XI century. However, in 1152, there was a little church dedicated to St. Barnabas in the palace of the archbishop. A document of 1174 speaks

of a certain Lanfranc, presbyter and superior of "St. Barnabas de Broli" in Milan.

Let us talk about this church, because it is certain that the present church of Sts. Paul and Barnabas in Via Commenda was built on at least some of the land occupied by it.

To confirm the site of the church of "St. Barnabas de Broli" it is enough to consider the present Basilica of "St. Nazaro in Brolo" not far from Via Commenda.

In 1892 the Fathers excavated under the altar to build the crypt in honor of St. Anthony M. Zaccaria. In May, during the excavation, the foundations of the old church of St. Barnabas were discovered.

Fr. Bernard Galli, a lover of archaeology and present at the work-site, wrote: "The old church of St. Barnabas occupied the area of the present sanctuary and choir. The measurements were: length, 14.50 ms.; width, 7 ms.; the front 9 ms. Everything was oriented according to the church built by the Barnabites." From sources of the 16th century we know that the church had another bell-tower opposite to the present one, and that in front of the church there was a cemetery, where tombs and stones were still visible in 1562.

Very likely the fresco of the 14th century, presently located in front of the pulpit, was part of the old church of St. Barnabas. The picture represents our Lady nourishing the Baby Jesus.

Near to the church, in 1145, Godfrey of Bussero founded the hospital of St. Barnabas for abandoned babies. Perhaps, in the beginning, the church was used by the laity of this hospital. Some say that it was served by the Benedictines. Certainly in 1230 the Lateran Canons Regular of the Order of St. Augustine were there. Some documents regarding

superiors and the monastery, testify to their presence in the church of St. Barnabas in 1321, 1369, 1437, 1464 and 1487. It is a fact that the monastery was located in the rear of the church where the foundations were discovered in the 18th century. Fr. Puricelli established that a Fr. Leopold Settala, from Vercelli, of the above mentioned Order, was parish priest of St. Barnabas in 1486. Therefore, we have to believe that the church of St. Barnabas had become a parish.

Fr. Leonard was, as far as we know, the last Canon Regular in St. Barnabas. As a matter of fact in 1498, John Baptist Beoleo was the parish priest, and in 1509 it was the Rev. Timothy Taegi. The monastery had been destroyed. At the beginning of the 15th century

Renato Triuizi allowed a new road, from the Naviglio to the front of “St. Mary of Peace” church (the present Via St. Barnabas), to go through its ruins. The new “Commendatary,” who succeeded the Canons Regular, built the rectory in the present Via Commenda. In this house, on the side of the church, in 1511, lived the Rev. Timothy Taegi, rector of the church of St. Barnabas. He died at the age of 64, on November 26, 1523, as it is established by the tomb stone located in the backyard of the sacristy. This was the work of Amico Taegi, his nephew, and his successor. We do not know how long Amico Taegi was rector of the church.

2. The Clerics Regular of St. Paul Receive the Church of St. Barnabas

- **Temporary Enlargement of the Old Church (1545-1547)**

In 1531 a young man from Cremona, Anthony Mary Zaccaria, came to Milan as chaplain to the Countess Torelli of Guastalla. He dedicated himself in her home to the “Renewal of Christian Fervor.” In 1533, he founded a diocesan congregation of religious priests which in 1535 became the Order of the Clerics Regular of St. Paul. The motherhouse of the new-born Order was the home of the Countess, near ~~by~~ the church of St. Ambrose. A church was necessary for their pastoral ministry. In 1538, Anthony Mary decided to ask for the church of St. Barnabas, which, at that time, was

quite neglected. On the 8th of October, 1538, he wrote to Bartholomew Ferrari: “I desire to see Father Castellino and I want him to stay here permanently because I’m thinking of going through with the project of St. Barnabas and I would like him to be present at the benediction and establishment of the church as a Barnabite parish.”

But because of his premature death on July 5, 1539, and many other difficulties, the project did not go through. Therefore, the Clerics Regular of St. Paul built, close to their house, a little church dedicated to St. Paul Decapitated, which was inaugurated on November 29, 1542. This is presently the

church of St. Augustine in Via Lanzone. This was “too small and it was not adequate to comfortably celebrate the Divine Offices; nor was it able to accommodate the large number of people attending the services.” Therefore, the Fathers returned to the idea of St. Barnabas’ church.

Much work was done and on May 19, 1545, the church was entrusted to the care of the Barnabites by Rev. Amico De Grittis, parish priest, with the permission to repair it and to enlarge it. The Barnabites received also the land with the ruins of the monastery to build their residence, and enough extra land for a garden. There was no charge for the deal except for some small requirements. The deal was confirmed by Pope Paul III on August 19 of the same year. The definitive confirmation was given by Pius V on December 1, 1570.

On October 21, 1545, the Fathers officially took possession of the church of St. Barnabas. They celebrated a Solemn High Mass, laid the cornerstone of their residence, to be completed in three years. On June 26, 1547,

following the Invocation of the Holy Spirit, the Fathers moved into their new home.

It was necessary to start immediately some repairs on the church, and the sons of Anthony M. Zaccaria did not waste any time. In the capitular chapters of July 13 and August 25, it was decided to take care of the dangerous sections and to provide a temporary enlargement with a big arch in the middle, two lateral altars and a large one in front of the choir. The design was the work of the same Fr. James Morigia, while Fr. Jerome Marta was in charge of the works. The blue prints are still in the archives of St. Barnabas. These provisional adaptations were finished in two months’ time: the Most Reverend Crivelli, Bishop of Tagaste, consecrated the church on November 1, 1547. The main altar was dedicated to Sts. Paul and Barnabas, the one on the right side to Our Lady, and the one on the left to St. John the Baptist. The house instead, totally new, was completed in 1547, and the Fathers were able to move in on June 28 of the same year.

3. Construction of the Present Church (1561-1566)

In 1554 the new Superior General, Fr. Jerome Marta, commissioned a certain Bartolomeo, a painter, for the definitive enlargement of the church. Also these blue prints are in the archives of St. Barnabas. They show, as in the previous ones of 1547, the same long choir, a shorter sanctuary, only one nave with two pillars on each side to create three chapels on the right and on the left. For this project it was necessary to expand a little toward the roadway, i.e. the present St. Barnabas Road. The request was presented to the Vicar of the city and to the “City Council.”

Not all the necessary land was given, therefore the project had to be modified.

A certain “Sir Galeazzo, a very expert architect,” did the modifications. (Recently his original blue prints have been discovered in an archive in Bergamo). He restricted the lateral chapels, leaving between the sanctuary and the third chapel room for the pulpit, and expanded the nave toward the road. This drawing is in the archives of the city of Milan in the Bianconi Collection.

The drawing for the sanctuary caused many reactions. In the capitular meeting of

February 1561, however, after having consulted Galeazzo, the Fathers decided to go along with the project.

Who was this man? He was Galeazzo Alessi from Perugia, and his glorious name is bound to the Marini and Giuriconsulti Palaces in Milan and to the church of St. Mary Garignano in Genoa.

Work began on February 1561, and lasted until 1568. During these years there were many discussions. One concerned the shape of the choir. Should it be circular or octagonal? Having consulted the architect, the Fathers decided for the circular form.

In 1564 the choir, the sanctuary, and the bell tower were met with approval and made ready. In 1567 the ceiling of the church was brought to completion and immediately the front was added. In the middle of the year everything was ready. On September 5, 1568, the Archbishop of Milan, St. Charles Borromeo, consecrated the main altar and placed in it the relics of the Martyrs Sts. Marcellinus and Sebastian, and of the Confessors Sts. Eugene and Remigius.

Ceiling Painting
over the
Choir Area



4. Decoration of the Church in the Second Half of the 16th Century



During the construction of the church the Fathers were already planning the decorations.

In March 1555 a painting of Our Lady by Anthony Campi was placed in the third chapel from the entrance on the right side. This work of art was stolen during the Napoleonic invasion and today is at the Brera Gallery in room XVIII with the No. 332.

The third chapel on the left was dedicated to St. John the Baptist. The picture was by Daniel Comio with a drawing by Bernardino Campi. Although present in 1564, this picture has since vanished.

The stucco-decorations were accomplished between the years 1567 and 1968 by Galeazzo Alessi. The imitation stucco

on the pillars, in the interior of the church, was made in 1832. Originally the pillars were channeled as we can see under the little consoles in the sanctuary and in the drawings by G. Alessi.

The face of the church was decorated with four niches with the statues of Sts. Paul and Peter on top, St. Barnabas (with miter and crosier) and St. Ambrose (with the whip) below. These statues appeared in the front of the church in a painting of the church of St. Jerome in which the church of St. Barnabas is depicted. This painting is dated 1573, and is located in the choir. It could be that also these statues were ordered by Galeazzo Alessi.

The stalls of the choir were designed by G. Alessi and were completed in 1567. They are simple and elegant, having only one bas-relief in the central stall, depicting the Barnabite coat of arms: The Cross with the letters P. A. (Paul the Apostle) at the two sides. This coat of arms is an exact reproduction of the seal used by the Fathers on their letterheads at the time of the construction of the church of St. Barnabas. These stalls of our church were used as a model for those of the “Duomo” in Milan, done by Paul Gazza.

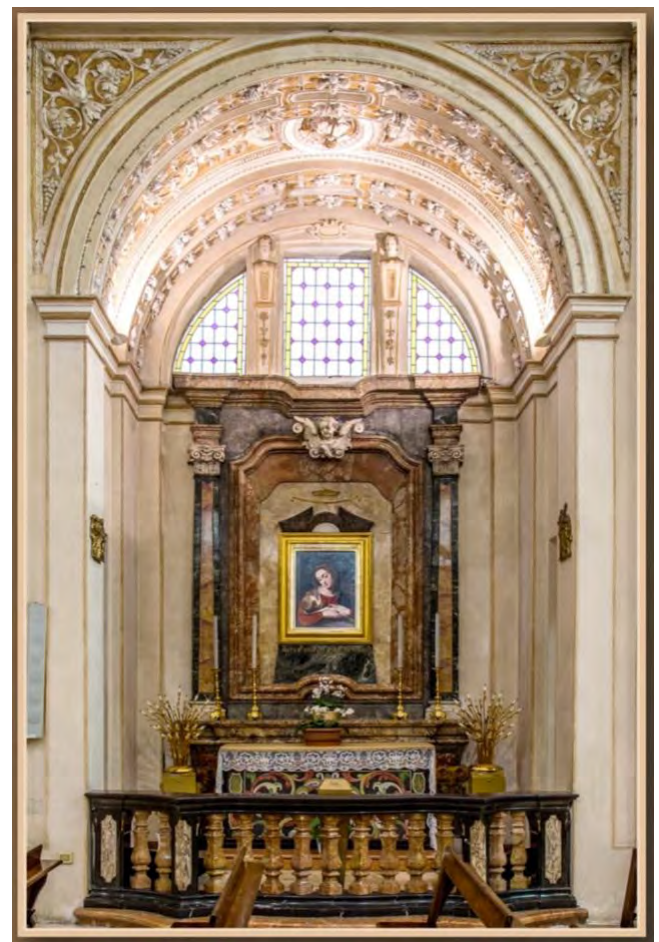
During the same year, permission was granted to build private tombs in our church according to the prescriptions of the First Provincial Council Meeting, which took place in Milan in 1565.

The bells, first the one of medium size, then the large one, were put in the tower in 1570. The present top of the tower dates to 1858. The original top was similar to the top of the two tower bells of the Basilica of Garignano in Genoa; designed by G. Alessi.

From 1570 to 1575 the decorations of the six chapels and of the sanctuary were completed. The privilege to sponsor the

execution of these works was given to those families who wished to “adopt” a chapel. These are the seven families:

- a. Bombelli family:** first chapel on the right, dedicated to the Passion. Painting of the Deposition by Aurelio Luini (today it is located in the second chapel on the right);
- b. Balbo family:** second chapel on the right, dedicated to St. Jerome. Painting by Charles Urbini from Crema (today located in the choir);
- c. Chiocca family:** third chapel on the right, dedicated to Our Lady. Painting by Anthony Campi;



d. Ferrari Family: first on the left, dedicated to St. Bartholomew (in honor of their brother, co-founder with St. Anthony M. Zaccaria of the Barnabites). Painting by Paul Lomazzo representing St. Bartholomew together with St. Francis of Assisi and St. Bernardino of Siena (today located above the sacristy door);

e. Omodei family: second on the left, dedicated to St. Ambrose. Painting of St. Ambrose (not Bassano) by Ambrose Gigino (today in the first chapel on the right);

f. Morigia family: third chapel, dedicated to St. John the Baptist. Painting by Daniel Cormio (it has disappeared);

g. Triuizi family: the “big chapel” or the sanctuary with the two big paintings of 1573 by Simeon Petrazzano, disciple of Titian and teacher of Caravaggio. They represent the election of Paul and Barnabas and the miracle of the two Apostles at Lystra.

The same painter, S. Petrazzano, painted the decapitation of St. Paul for the main altar; later it was located at the end of the church and in 1580 it was substituted with a bronze group representing the Crucifixion with the two thieves, a gift of John Francis Cavenago. A resurrected Christ in bronze covered with pottery was located in the niche at the top of the choir, while in the little niches of the tabernacle there were different small statues in bronze, all by Hannibal Fontana. They existed up to the end of the 18th century, then they disappeared.



In 1585, St. Charles donated many relics. They were arranged in a reliquary in the form of a little wardrobe with the back and the door panels subdivided in numerous little squares made of ebony and Indian nut; this reliquary with 194 relics, in December 24, 1585, was set in the rear of the main altar in an artistic arrangement of golden wood; a few years later it replaced the Calvary scene, which ended up in the sacristy and then, at the end of 1700, it too disappeared.



5. Restoration and Contaminations by the Baroque of the 17th & 18th Centuries

There is no Romantic or Renaissance church which was not contaminated by the Baroque style. Also our church of St. Barnabas was subjected to such influence. But, at the same time, the original renaissance structure by G. Alessi was preserved.

These are the most important restorations made during the Baroque period:

a. The whole church was painted in white with the stucco in gold (1603).

b. The Knight Mark Anthony of the Cross donated a tabernacle in the form of a small temple, with two wooden Angels in gold, for the sanctuary, to be used as candlesticks in front of the Blessed Sacrament; and a picture,

of little value, of St. John the Baptist for the third chapel (1622).

c. The choir, which until then had been ignored, was adorned with four pictures: The Nativity of the Lord, the Adoration by the Magi, the Road to Calvary, and the Crucifixion; they were copies made by the Milanese Francis Bellone from the originals by Gaudenzio Ferrari, located in the church of St. Christopher in Vercelli (1622-1624).

d. The frescos are the work of the famous painter Camillo Procaccini. On July 3, 1624 he signed the contract to paint the choir of the church at a cost of 300 escudos. The work was completed a year later on July 24, 1625. The frescos of the ceiling of the choir represent twelve angelic musicians, the one in the apse depicts Christ resurrected as He appears to Our Lady and to the Saints of the Old Testament.

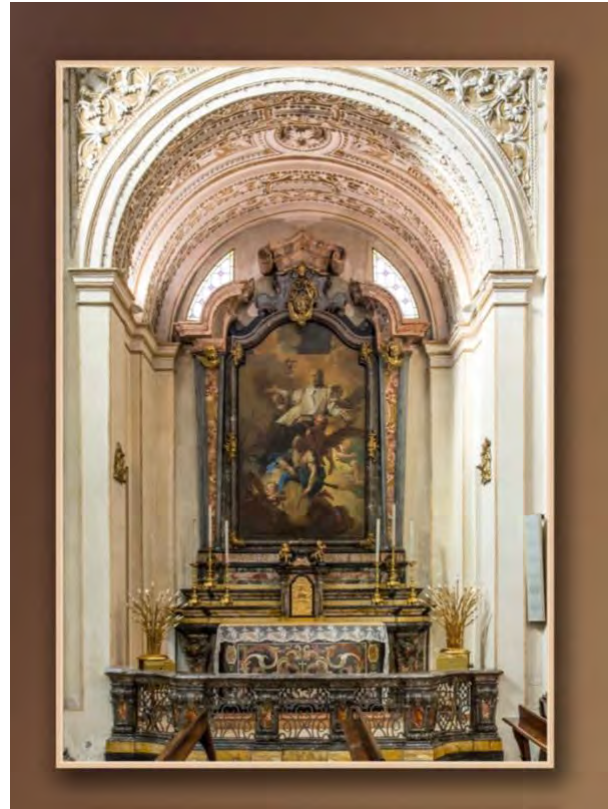
e. In 1639, Fr. Bernardino Alessi, having gathered some offerings, built the present altar with the tabernacle, the steps for the candlesticks, the cross and the little throne: very valuable works in ebony covered with sea turtle shells and silver ornaments.

f. Beautiful choir stalls were added above the main door in 1680; these are not there anymore. The present ones were constructed in 1832.

g. Circular marble brackets (1694) were added to the corners of the sanctuary; the iron railing between the sanctuary and the aisle was eliminated and substituted with one in black and red marble with a small iron gate with two bronze medallions of Sts. Paul and Barnabas. The gate was eliminated a few years ago.

h. In 1721 all the chapels were decorated with frescos by excellent painters,

among whom Joseph Anthony Castelli and Joseph Mariani. These frescos were erased in 1832. During the cleanup of 1950 they reappeared in the first chapel on the left.



i. When in 1741 the Barnabite bishop Alexander Sauli, superior of St. Barnabas from 1567 to 1570, was declared Blessed by the Church, the Fathers decided to dedicate to his honor a special chapel, the one of St. Ambrose (2nd on the left). It was adorned in Baroque style with precious marbles and golden bronze. Worth mentioning is the head of the Cherubim with two branches interlaced with roses (on the side) and lilies above the frame, and angels in the middle in golden bronze; the altar piece representing St. Alexander Sauli carried to heaven by angels is the work of Matthias Botoloni. The chapel was inaugurated the 26th of February, 1742.

j. The six new confessionals in Baroque style with curves and counter curves, which are still the present ones, are of 1749. They are the work of excellent cabinet makers who worked for a full year.

k. To complete the Baroque style of the confessionals, every chapel was adorned with marble railings in place of the iron ones (1756); at this time a project was considered to tear down the monastery of St. Barnabas and to build a new one with a larger church. This project, however, never went through, but the design is still in the archives.

l. The last work of this transformation was the third chapel on the left. Here had been located in 1738, from the main altar, the reliquary of St. Charles Borromeo with the

relics of Christ and the Virgin, among them the Thorns from Christ's crown. The chapel was adorned with marble and bas-reliefs in iron and golden copper. The reliquary was redecorated and the three thorns were placed in a monstrance with four seals of Cardinal Joseph Pozzobonelli, Archbishop of Milan, which today is located in a tabernacle beneath the reliquary. The decoration of the chapel was entrusted to Anthony Longoni. On the two corners were located two marble busts of St. Charles Borromeo and St. Francis de Sales. In 1832 the paintings by Longoni were erased and the two busts were placed in the Fathers' recreation room.

6. Happenings during the Government of Joseph II of Austria and Napoleon (1765-1815)

Milan and the whole Lombardy were, during the second half of the 1700's, under the Austrian domination.

In 1765 the Emperor Francis I died and was succeeded by Joseph II. The Illuminists who believed in a lay and totalitarian concept of the State, looked with trust to the new Emperor. Joseph II, imbued with the new Illuminist philosophy, felt the call to carry on their aspirations and ideals with reforms which would fully affect the ecclesial world too.

In 1769 he forbade evening services; he obliged the Clerics Regular to participate in processions; and, in 1766, forbade burials in churches or close to inhabited areas.

Because of such prohibition burials also in St. Barnabas had to be stopped. From the time of the construction of the church the burials in St. Barnabas had multiplied. The Fathers and Brothers had their tombs under the choir on the side of the apse. Noble families and families of devout faithful were also buried there.

It would be too long to make a list of those buried in St. Barnabas, but here are some of the most illustrious people with the date of burial: 1557, Alexander Lampugnani; 1580, Isabella Giussani, mother of the Venerable Charles Bascapè (Barnabite, Bishop of Novara); 1562, Pomponio Cusani; 1590, Lucia Sauli, sister of St. Alexander Sauli; 1598, Cardinal Agostino Cusani (his cardinal hat was

hanging on the tomb); 1617, Christopher Croc, Knight of St. Stephen; 1640, Ottavio Picinardi, president of the Senate.

On February 20, 1790, the Emperor Joseph II died in Vienna. His brother Leopold I succeeded him but died only two years later. He was succeeded by Francis II, nephew of Marie Antoinette of France. As soon as Francis II took power he was challenged by the French Republic by a declaration of war. Vienna, in war with Paris, was in need of money and of men. In July, 1793, together with the draft, the government required the collection, on a loan, of all gold and silver objects as signs of devotion and gratitude by the faithful, except for those objects needed for the liturgy.

The Fathers of St. Barnabas gathered in chapter, decided to loan about half of the silver objects of the church. The memory of the execution of religious and priests by the French revolutionaries was too vivid not to accept to help the Emperor of Austria!

In spite of all the help with men and means, the Austrian war ended up to be a disaster: on May 24, 1796, the French troops entered Milan; the next day the whole French army, under the command of Napoleon, entered the city through the Roman gate. Under the Napoleonic government the requisitions of gold, silver and precious objects were an everyday affair. On November 17, the Fathers received the order to "make ready," without delay, all the silver of the church of St. Barnabas, therefore the little silver left over was deposited in the Mint of Milan.

When the nobility, and of course the noble coat of arms, were abolished on April 18, 1797, the revolutionaries erased with a chisel the coat of arms and noble titles from all the tombs. You can still see today in the sacristy courtyard the tomb-stone of the Count Dionisio

Filiodomo with the scars of the chisel. On June



3, 1789 there was the requisition of gold embroidered vestments. On November 26, some of the art work from the sacristy and from the church had to be given, including the Madonna with Child, St. Joseph, St. Magdalene, and St. Agnes by A. Campi. The last one is now at the Brera Museum (Catalogue # 332 in the Gallery).

Six times, between August 15, 1798 and January 1, 1801, the army tried to take over the church and the monastery to use them as garrisons or hospitals. Every time the Fathers were able to keep the church and part of the monastery.

On April 25, 1810, Napoleon Bonaparte decreed the suppression of all Religious Orders. The Barnabites too had to leave their monastery and the church of St. Barnabas. Both, church and monastery were

given to the Ammutinazione family. They were bought, on July 30, 1810, by the Count Gian Mario Andreani, pressured by Carlo Inbonati, a close friend of the Barnabites. The Count was able to obtain the permission to keep the church open, entrusted to the care of the pastor of St. Calimero and of the Passion. In November of

1811, Count Andreani obtained the permission to use the monastery of St. Barnabas as a refuge for ex-religious of different suppressed Religious Orders, who were old and sick, and the use of St. Barnabas' church for worship. In this way the church was kept open.

7. The Restorations of the Last Century (1825-1861)

With the peace signed in Paris on May 30, 1814, the Lombard Provinces were again part of the Austrian Empire. In the climate of the restoration, the Count Gian Mario Andreani and some ex-Barnabites, encouraged by the Count Alfonso Castiglioni, petitioned for nine years, and finally on October 13, 1825, obtained to re-establish the Barnabites in Lombardy.

The Count Andreani right away gave to the re-established community of St. Barnabas the use and the enjoyment of the monastery with the garden, and also the church. The few ex-religious of different Orders still in St. Barnabas since 1811 remained there until their death.

After fifteen years of absence, the Barnabites found their church dirty, ruined, and humid. Immediately they took care of the most urgent repairs. The works for a total and systematic restoration were started at the beginning of May 1832, and were concluded at the end of November of the same year.

A new roof was provided and the walls were repainted to remove the humidity. Twenty-three tombs were removed from the church, the bones were relocated in the tomb of the Fathers under the choir, where they are still today. Therefore, the whole floor of the church was removed and, to avoid the humidity, a

foundation of stones was laid. Special paint was used to clean the walls; the stuccoes were cleaned and repainted in gold.

The painter Antonio Salmoiraghi made the mistake of removing the flutes (done by Alessi) of the pilasters strips so that he could paint on them fake stuccoes in gold. Probably he wanted to lower the rich decorations of the stuccoes, but he overdid it, making them very heavy. The painter Charles Bellosio repainted according to the original composition the inferior part of the fresco in the apse which had been ruined by the potassium nitro.

The sculptor Stanga took the trouble to transform the statue of the risen Christ by Fontana in the niche of the choir, into a St. John the Baptist.

The four large paintings in the choir of the 1600's, copies from the originals by Gaudenzio Ferrari, were removed because they could not be repaired and were substituted with the present ones:

- a) Madonna with Child, which was started in Cremona by Sofonisba, a disciple of Bernardino Campi, and terminated by Antonio Campi;
- b) St. Jerome, by Carlo Urbibi (1573);
- c) St. Francis of Assisi in prayer, which was bought on September 27, 1832, a work done in the first half of the 1600's;

d) Madonna with St. Charles and St. Philip Neri, most likely of Nuvolone. Also the paintings in the sanctuary and in the lateral chapels were restored, and they were so distributed:

- 1) in the first chapel on the right: St. Ambrose by Figino;
- 2) in the second: deposition by Aurelio Luino;
- 3) in the third: Madonna and St. Anthony of Padua, copy of the original by Van Dyck located at the Brera Museum, to substitute the Madonna by Campi stolen by Napoleon, as said above.

The pulpit and the organ loft were rebuilt in neo-classic style. A large plaque in marble was situated under the pulpit to commemorate the restoration of the church in 1832, and to acknowledge the generosity of the Count Giovanni Maria toward the church and the monastery. On April 16, 1834, the plaque was removed and relocated in front of the sacristy door. At its place another plaque was erected with the portrait in bas-relief of the great benefactor. The whole work is in pure neo-classic style.

The church was restored in 1832. In 1854 the marble covering the altar reliquary broke, therefore, automatically the altar had to be consecrated again. It took place on July 6, 1854, by the Most Rev. Gaetano Benaglia, Bishop of Lodi. The old relics were used, adding to the parchment of St. Charles a new one attesting to the new consecration.

Years later in 1858, the upper part of the bell tower was redone since it had become dangerous. It was in a different style by the architect Enrico Terzaghi. He had the bright

idea to leave for us the design of the part which was demolished, as it was conceived by Alessi.



8. The Church of St. Barnabas Becomes Once Again Property of the Barnabites (1881)

The Count Gian Mario Andreani, in 1825, had given to the Barnabites only the use and the enjoyment of the church and monastery, while he had kept the title to the property.

When he died on January 20, 1831, the property went to the heir, the Count Joseph Sormani. It was for the best if the property was not given to the Barnabites right away, because a decree of the Italian government of July 7, 1866, did not recognize any more the existence of any Religious Order or Congregation, and claimed the titles of their houses and churches.

The Count Alexander Sormani, son of Joseph, was able to demonstrate his rights over the monastery and the church, and on April 21, 1867 the Italian government recognized his rights.

Because of bad administration, in 1872, the Count Sormani found himself full of debts, with the danger that also the monastery and the church of St. Barnabas could fall victims of his debts.

The Barnabite Fathers were among his creditors, because of at least five loans in the years 1864-1865, for a total of 34,935 liras. Fr. Spirito Conti informed Fr. General, Alexander Baravelli, suggesting to buy the church and the monastery calculating the credit of that amount in the price.

Fr. General not only answered immediately that "it was a good idea, but rather it was urgent to strike a deal for the acquisition of that property." The deal was signed on September 12, 1881 at the price of 160,000 liras.

Once the church and the house were bought, works started for a more definite remodeling beginning with the church:

- 1884: it was the third centennial of St. Charles Borromeo's death. A good painter received the commission for a picture of the Saint on his knees, taken from the picture by Crespi (Ambrosian Gallery). The painting was located in the chapel at the right, in the place of St. Ambrose by Figino. Now it is located in the North corridor of the monastery.

- 1890: to celebrate the reinstatement of the cult in honor of the Blessed Anthony M. Zaccaria, the stuccoes were remodeled.

For the reinstatement of the cult, the body of the Saint had to be located. Following vague documents about the location of the tomb, the body of the Blessed was found on May 8, 1891. On October 5 of the same year the Curia of Milan, having recognized the body, gave the approval to expose the body to the veneration by the public. At the beginning the Fathers thought to expose it in the second chapel on the right, then they decided for a crypt under the sanctuary and the choir. It was built by the architect Carlo Maciachini from March to November 1892. In the April of 1892 the glass urn with the bones of the Blessed was put in the crypt, which was blessed by the future Barnabite Cardinal Joseph Graniello.

A great devotion developed quite fast so that the church of St. Barnabas became, if not officially, at least by reputation, the shrine of the Blessed Anthony M. Zaccaria. As a matter of fact, in 1897 he was canonized as a Saint. For this occasion, electric power was installed in the church followed by a heating system four years later.

In 1905 the façade was reconstructed with marble of Godoglia and Verona. The central door was narrowed and the base elevated. In the fillet between the upper and the lower part of the façade they put the bronze letters SS. PAVLO ET BARNABAE APP. (dedicated to the apostles Sts. Paul and Barnabas).

In 1927 the statue of St. John the Baptist was destroyed and an ugly statue of St. Anthony Mary was put in its place.

In 1932 the third chapel on the right was dedicated to Our Lady of Divine Providence. The painting of Our Lady with child by Van Dick was transferred in the sacristy.

In 1941 the first chapel on the left was dedicated to St. Joseph with a small picture of the Saint, a copy from the original by Nuvolone, by the Polish artist Jost.

The picture of St. Bartholomew from that chapel was transferred in the sacristy, above the main door.

In 1948-1950, the external sides of the church were redone and the façade was repainted. The fresco in the apse was restored and so the paintings in the choir and the statues in the sanctuary. The St. Ambrose by Figino was relocated in the first chapel on the right. The glasses of the choir and of the façade were changed. The statues of St. Charles and of St. Ambrose were removed from the sanctuary and so also the ugly statue of St. Anthony Mary from the choir, which was substituted with a beautiful bronze statue done by Gian Maria Stoppani.

The same artist, in 1964, restored the façade which was black with smog. In 1965, he created the new bronze main door, with four scenes of St. Paul's life, two of St. Anthony's,

and two of the Vatican Council II, which had open a new era also for the Church of St. Barnabas.



March 24, 1990

With a *tour de force* the artists, under the direction of Fr. Angelo Mascaretti, completed a three-year effort to bring the interior of the church to its original simplicity and beauty. This event allows to bring to a solemn conclusion the celebrations for the 450th anniversary of the death of the Holy Founder. For the occasion the Zaccarian family, led by the General Councils of the Barnabites and the Angelics, was gathered together. Two parchments with the names of the Barnabites and the Angelics of the time were laid next to the heart of the Father. Cardinal Achille Silvestrini, Prefect of the Apostolic Signatura, presided the ceremony and consecrated again the main altar.

A new consecration had become necessary because the altar slab had been reduced in size over a new base containing now the body of the Holy Founder, St. Anthony M. Zaccaria, in a glass urn. With greater evidence now the church of St. Barnabas is indeed the shrine of St. Anthony M. Zaccaria.

In solemn procession the urn was carried from the Zaccaria Institute through Via Commenda to the church of St. Barnabas. The urn was carried by four Barnabite Deacons, with on the side four Angelics with burning torches. After welcoming words by Fr. Franco Monti, Provincial Superior, the Eucharist concelebration took place, highlighted by the consecration of the altar by Cardinal Silvestrini. The most moving moment was when, after the relics were enclosed in the marble slab, the urn with the body of the Holy

Founder was placed under the altar. The taking possession of “his shrine” was greeted by an enthusiastic applause by the crowd of the faithful present.

Thursday, May 22, 2010, in the Marzorati Room of the Zaccaria Institute a meeting was held to celebrate the accomplished restoration of St. Barnabas’ façade, a work which had lasted for 16 long months. This initiative, implemented by the religious community, had seen as a promoter and organizer Prof. Architect Daniela Fiocchi, a professor at the Zaccaria Institute, but especially true friend of the Fathers. The culmination of the restoration of the façade of the Church (but also that of the sacristy done of last year) is due to her patient work; she was the designer, director and responsible with her technical and professional presence. To her, the gratitude of the community of St. Barnabas and the major superiors. For the occasion an artistic post stamp in gold was made, issued in series sealed and numbered. This reproduces in lithograph a painting by Emilia Cambiaso, depicting the Shrine of St. Anthony M. Zaccaria in Milan, accompanied in the background by the Holy Founder’s image, with the words “*Do not be inferior to the vocation to which you have been called*” (Letter VII).